the personages of the Greek mythology, can be traced to the land of the Pharaohs.

It has been a fashion with some writers, following the example of an ancient author, to derive classic architecture from timber construction. I confess that to me the connection is not sufficiently made out; it is not carried through in a clear and satisfactory succession; links are wanting, and can never be supplied in the chain of evidence; the fancy is appealed to at the expense of sober reason, and hence I cannot perceive the resemblance between a temple of Minerva and the hut of Pelasgus.

The "sylvan hypothesis" has been actually revived within the last few days, for in a work recently published we find this announcement —"To deny that the purest ecclesiastical Gothic exhibits the most striking similitude to the interlacing of groves and trees, as well as to the construction of wicker-work, were as unreasonable as to shut our eyes to the marked analogy between the Grecian Doric temple and the wooden hut."* The refutation of the former part of this opinion, the revived dogma of Warburton and Sir James Hall, may be safely left to our excellent secretary, to whose work on "Ancient Gothic Churches" our society must rejuice to find that ample justice has been accorded: it is to the latter part of this revived but untenable opinion that my present observations will apply.

We offer no violence to our convictions if we admit the obligations of the Greeks to the Egyptians in architecture, if, knowing how much in all other respects the former were indebted to the latter, we also acknowledge that they did not disdain to derive from that ancient people much, at all events, to serve as hints in the arts of construction.

Instead, therefore, of forced attempts to plan a pure Greek temple, with all its details, upon the hypothesis of its prototype being found in trunks of trees ranged in rows, with beams and cross-beams representing architraves and triglyphs, aided, moreover, in the working out from other sources that which could not be obtained in types of vegetable nature, by giving to one order the proportions of a man, to another that of a female; yet, strange to say, in these the plan of nature is reversed, for the manly example is shorter than the womanly type,—instead of these unsatisfactory theories, let us turn to actual experiences of art yet existing before our eyes, in which we shall find evidences too strong to be resisted of the true origin of Grecian architecture.

One of the earliest arrangements of the Greek temple was, without doubt, that which has in front the portico in Antis, that is, the columns are placed between pilastrated ends of the flank walls, consequently such temples were not peripteral, as was commonly the case in later times. This was the usual arrangement of the temples in Egypt: there is not, to the best of my recollection, an example known of a peripteral temple in that country; and thus the resemblance is very striking that exists between the Greek temples of Themis at Rhamnus, of Diana at Eleusis, and those at Hermonthis, and Tentyris, in Egypt. We may here observe that the strange and appalling mysteries of Ceres, observed in her temple at Eleusis, were of the same nature, and derived from those of the goddess Isis, which were practised in the Egyptian temples. As trees do not grow square, we certainly can find no types in them of the antæ, which are, in truth, the natural terminations of the walls.†

No derivation merely from the trees of groves could suggest an arrangement of the plan of a temple, but we find in many respects the Greek temples resembling those of Egypt. In each there was the same precaution taken to exclude the profane crowd; in each the inner sanctuary or shrine of the divinity was to be approached only by the privileged few, the appointed and hereditary guardians of the fane; and probably every sacred building in Greece, had, like those of Egypt, its peribolus, or sacred wall of enclosure, to prevent the too near access of the uninitiated; for in nearly every known example of a temple, traces are discovered of this surrounding wall. Again the same determination to throw a veil of secrecy and solemnity over the religious observances, caused the sacred buildings in both countries to be alike deficient in light, to be alike in their interiors involved in the gloom and mystery so favourable and so necessary to carry on deception; and consequently we hardly ever find an equivalent for windows in temples, for in almost every instance the light was only admitted through the portal.

Little is known concerning the Eleusinian mysteries, as the initiated were obliged to contract a solemn engagement to observe secrecy, and those who revealed their knowledge were looked upon as profane wretches, with whom it was not safe to hold any intercourse; thus Horace exclaims (Od. ii. lib. iii.)—

"Beneath one roof ne'er let him rest with me
Who Ceres' mysteries reveals;
In one frail bark ne'er let us put to sea,
Nor tempt the jarring winds with spreading sails."*

Again the absence of everything like timber construction is seen in the closeness with which the columns are clustered together; in both countries this feature is remarkable, the result entirely of stone and not of timber combinations, for a beam of wood will span a much larger opening with safety than can be attempted in stone, and we must also recollect that Egypt had no timber-trees. But what do we find in her architecture, but constantly recurring imitations of her natural productions as will presently be seen; but whilst these are introduced in the way of ornamentation, no trace can be found of their adoption as hints for construction, for which indeed their fragile and yielding forms would be quite inappropriate.

Having thus far noticed the absence of every thing like timber construction in Egyptian buildings, let us proceed to ascertain how far an imitation of nature *did* prevail in the details. The fact is too clear to admit of the slightest doubt upon the point, that Egyptian columns were only enormous bundles of the reed or bulrush of the Nile, tied together at intervals by bands of twigs, exactly after the manner of the hoops of a beer-barrel. We need not travel to Egypt itself for proof; we have only to go as far as the British Museum, where we shall see a column of dark granite, which is an imitation of reeds banded together, and the capital has a remarkable likeness to that of a Grecian Doric column:—a flat tile, the abacus of all nations, pressing strongly upon the supporting column, which is tied closely round the neck, near the top, has caused the reeds to bulge out, almost in the very form of the Echinus. This peculiar shape of capital is very common in the temples of Egypt, and may be considered, if I may use the expression, as the Doric example of that country, as the capitals which have the heads of Isis may be called the Ionic exemplar, and those which have foliated copies of the palm and lotus may be looked upon as the Corinthian specimen; and I am inclined to find in these varieties the real origin of the Grecian, Doric, Ionic, and Corinthian, rather than in the pretty, but baseless fables of matronly ringlets and virginal baskets: and here we may observe, in refutation of the opinions which would ascribe the invention of two, at least, of the three orders to persons bearing certain names like them, that the profoundest Greek scholar of the day, the Bishop of St. David's, considers "Æolus, Dorus, Achæus, Ion, to be merely fictitious persons, representations of the races which bore their names." (Hist. of Greece, vol. I. p. 107.) Thus another favourite dogma falls to the ground.

It surely cannot be considered as too great a tax upoo our understanding, to believe that among the travellers who resorted to Egypt as the great nursery of the arts and sciences, in addition to the poets, philosophers, and legislators, who flocked thither to imbibe lessons of wisdom and instruction, there were also those who would be impressed with the majesty, the vastness, and the execution of the temples and monuments of the country, who would also, on returning to their own land, then only emerging from recent barbarism, seek to introduce imitations of what had appeared to them so grand, so beautiful, and so worthy of adoption.

Nay, we may be inclined to think that the earlier structures of Greece, of which not one vestige now remains of consequence, the temples which existed before the Persian invasion, may have been built very closely after the Egyptian manner, with much of that stiffness and formality and want of grace which marked alike their architecture and their sculpture; and we know that in the latter art, the productions of the early sculptors of Greece, were of a most rude and primitive character.

So many of the Egyptian ceremonies and customs were received at Athens, that it is not to be wondered at, in the city founded by the Egyptian Cecrops, that one of their writers upbraids the Athenians that "They had made their city to be Egypt instead of Athens."—"But," to use the words of one who has written so admirably of Greek taste that it is impossible to express the sentiment with more force than in the language of the noble writer, Lord Aberdeen, "in thus mentioning the obligations of Grecian architecture to the practice of Egypt, the statement must be understood as limited to the mere mechanism of the art, and not as intended in any degree to detract from the just claims of the Greeks to originality:—if indeed the discovery of all that is admirable, of all in which its beauty and attractions consist, can sanction such a claim, we may safely place this art among those which they most distinguished by the fertility of their invention, as well as by the unparalled beauties of their execution."

Another author, Heeren, has, in one sentence, expressed a volume of just criticism:—"What the Grecian touched became gold, though it had before been of baser metal." (History of Ancient Greece, p. 45.)

In the early ages, men had neither temples nor statues for their gods, but worshipped towards heaven in the open air, and chiefly on elevated spots, of which we find such frequent mention in sacred and profane history. The Persians in particular, even in times when temples and statues were common among other nations, had none, "not thinking," says Herodotus, "the gods to be of human shape, as did the Greeks;" and to this difference of opinion we may ascribe the motive of the monarch Xerxes, in burning and destroying the temples of Greece, against which his anger was particularly directed, for Cicero tells us that the Persians thought it absurd to confine the gods within walls "whose house and temple was this whole world,"—"quorum hic mundus omnis templum esset ac domus."—*Lib. II. De Legibus.*

How finely does Æschylus, the warrior bard, who had distinguished himself so greatly in the glorious battles of Marathon, Salamis, and Platæa, make the ghost of Darius, in the drama of "The Persians," ascribe their defeat as a just recompense for having profaned the temples, and

"in vengeance for their proud
And impious daring: for where'er they held
Through Greece their march, they feared not to profane
The statues of the gods; their hallowed shrines.
Fired from their firm foundations, to the ground
Levelled their temples."

But, like the fabled Phœnix reviving from its ashes, Greece arose from amidst the desolation of her hearths and the destruction of her altars, with a splendour and purity of architecture such as the world had never seen, and after the signal and glorious revenge which the Greeks obtained at Salamis, Platæa, and Mycale upon the myriads of their invaders, and when the Persian host had turned their backs for ever upon Greece in flight and disgrace, the Athenians had breathing-time to turn their attention to the restoration of their beloved fatherland, and the rebuilding of their desecrated and ruined temples.

It was fortunate for Athens, that at this era two men flourished among her denizens, to whom that city, and indeed the whole world, was so greatly indebted for directing the public taste in the right channel.

The conclusive defeat of the Persians occurred 480 B.C., and "after these times," says Diodorus (b. xii.), "for the space of fifty years Greece received a great increase of prosperity, for, in these times, the arts, by means of the

* "Ancient and Modern Art, Historical and Critical; by George Cleghorn."

† When Leontychidas, king of Sparta, visited Corinth (490 B.C.), on seeing the ceiling of the house in which he was staying ornamented with sunk panels, he asked his host if the trees in Corinth were naturally four-cornered?

* Socrates, Diagorus, Æschylus, and Alcibiades, all incurred disgrace and danger for speaking too freely of the mysteries of Ceres.

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